AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

Claims 1-6 (cancelled)

Claim 7 (new): A vehicle driver's fatigue evaluating method for quantitatively calculating a degree of fatigue of a driver seated on a seat based on an amount of rearward deflection of a lower part of a backrest portion of the seat, a load applied downward to a front part of a seating portion of the seat, and a load applied rearward to an upper part of the backrest portion, in a state of the driver being seated on the seat.

Claim 8 (new): The vehicle driver's fatigue evaluating method as defined in claim 7, wherein the degree of fatigue of the driver seated on the seat is calculated quantitatively by using an operational expression determined by a statistical technique.

Claim 9 (new): The vehicle driver's fatigue evaluating method as defined in claim 8, wherein said operational expression is obtained by a multiple regression analysis with the amount of rearward deflection of the lower part of the backrest portion, the load applied downward to the front part of the seating portion and the load applied rearward to the upper part of the backrest portion regarded as explanatory variables, and an actual degree of fatigue measured of the driver seated on the seat as a response variable.

Claim 10 (new): The vehicle driver's fatigue evaluating method as defined in claim 9, wherein said actual degree of fatigue is derived from a viscoelastic property of waist muscles of the driver seated on the seat.

Claim 11 (new): A vehicle seat evaluating apparatus comprising:

a first detecting device for detecting an amount of rearward deflection of a lower part of a backrest portion of a seat, a second detecting device for detecting a load applied downward to a front part of a seating portion of the seat, and a third detecting device for detecting a load applied rearward to an upper part of the backrest portion, in a state of the driver being seated on the seat;

a calculating device for quantitatively calculating a degree of fatigue of the driver seated on the seat based on detection values of said first, second and third detecting devices; and

an evaluating device for evaluating the seat by the degree of fatigue calculated by said calculating device.

Claim 12 (new): A vehicle seat evaluating method for evaluating a seat with a degree of fatigue calculated by a vehicle driver's fatigue evaluating method for quantitatively calculating a degree of fatigue of a driver seated on the seat based on an amount of rearward deflection of a lower part of a backrest portion of the seat, a load applied downward to a front part of a seating portion of the seat, and a load applied rearward to an upper part of the backrest portion, in a state of the driver being seated.

Claim 13 (new): The vehicle seat evaluating method as defined in claim 12, wherein the degree of fatigue of the driver seated on the seat is calculated quantitatively by using an operational expression determined by a statistical technique.

Claim 14 (new): A vehicle seat evaluating method as defined in claim 12, wherein said operational expression is obtained by a multiple regression analysis with the amount of rearward deflection of the lower part of the backrest portion, the load applied downward to the front part of the seating portion, and the load applied rearward to the upper part of the backrest portion regarded as explanatory variables, and an actual degree of fatigue measured of the driver seated on the seat as a response variable.

Claim 15 (new): A vehicle seat evaluating method as defined in claim 14, wherein said actual degree of fatigue is derived from a viscoelastic property of waist muscles of the driver seated on the seat.